

The 'Aqīdah of al-Dāraquṭnī (306-385)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A topic of dispute which has recently been in discussion online concerns the true creed of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraquṭnī al-Shafī‘ī (d. 385); was he *Ash‘arī* or *Atharī* inclined? Those who contend that he agreed with the *Ashā’irah* often cite the following incident involving *al-Hāfiẓ* al-Dāraquṭnī and his student, Abū Dharr al-Harawī (d. 434), wherein the former praises the *Ash‘arī* scholar Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403):

وقال أبو الوليد الباقي في كتاب «اختصار فرق الفقهاء» [...] لقد أخبرني أبو ذر، وكان يميل إلى مذهبة، فسألته: من أين لك هذا؟ فقال: كنت ماشياً ببغداد مع الدارقطني فلقينا القاضي أبو بكر، فالترمه الشيخ أبو الحسن المدارقطني، وقبل وجهه وعينيه، فلما فارقناه قلت: من هذا؟ فقال: هذا إمام المسلمين والمذاهب عن المدينة القاضي أبو بكر محمد بن الطيب. قال أبو ذر: فمن ذلك الوقت تكررت عليه.

Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī [d. 474] said in the book *Ikhtiṣar firaq al-Fuqahā’*: I was informed by Abū Dharr [al-Harawī], who used to incline towards his [i.e., al-Bāqillānī’s] creed, [when] I asked him, “For which reason have you done this?” So [Abū Dharr al-Harawī] replied, “I was walking in *Baġdād* with al-Dāraquṭnī when we were met with *al-Qādī* Abū Bakr [al-Bāqillānī], so he [al-Dāraquṭnī] embraced him and kissed his face and [between] his two eyes. When we had departed from him, I asked him, “Who is this?” So [al-Dāraquṭnī] said, ‘This is the leader of the Muslims and the defender of the religion: *al-Qādī* Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib.’” Abū Dharr said, “From that moment, I began to frequently go to him.”¹

Firstly, a scholar praising another doesn’t entail the former’s acceptance of the latter’s creed. Ibn Daqīq al-‘Id (d. 702)² and Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852)³ both gave substantial praise for Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728), but this obviously does not mean they agreed with his ‘aqīdah!

1 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 29, p. 406. I do not believe there is any convincing reason for rejecting this report, as it is corroborated by what is narrated by Ibn ‘Asākir in his *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392.

2 Ibn Nāṣir al-Dimashqī, *al-Radd al-Wāfir*, p. 59

3 *Taqrīz li-l-Hāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī ‘alā-l-Radd al-Wāfir*, p. 12

Secondly, al-Bāqillānī was known in his time for debating and refuting the Christians, and it is likely that this is the reason *Imām* al-Dāraqutnī praised him. This is indicated by him describing al-Bāqillānī as being a “leader of the Muslims” and “defender of the religion” as this is a clear reference to Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī’s defence of Islām against the emperor of Rome and on other occasions as well, refuting the objections raised by Christians⁴ & other groups. This is not the same as, for instance, describing al-Bāqillānī as being “the *Imām* of Ahl al-Sunnah.” Such a description would imply acceptance of his creed, whereas al-Dāraqutnī had praised him in terms that do not imply this.

It is true that in another wording of this encounter, al-Dāraqutnī praised al-Bāqillānī by saying, “This is the sword of the Sunnah: Abu Bakr [al-Bāqillānī], the *Ash‘ari*,”⁵ and this does admittedly indicate acceptance of his ‘aqīdah. However, because the *isnād* of this strange wording is questionable and includes unnamed narrators, precedence is to be given to the account cited earlier recorded directly by Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī in his book.

Thirdly, can we actually confirm that *Imām* Abū al-Ḥasan al-Dāraqutnī was even aware of the ‘aqīdah held by al-Bāqillānī? There is reason to question this, since we have the work of *Imām* Abū Naṣr al-Sijzī (d. 444) wherein he described al-Bāqillānī as hiding his ‘aqīdah and praising *Imām* Aḥmad alongside other adherents to *Ahl al-Hadīth*.⁶ *Imām* al-Dhahabī also described al-Bāqillānī as defending the methodology of *Ahl al-Hadīth* and the *Ḥanābilah*, despite him (inwardly) also opposing them in some matters.⁷

In other words, al-Bāqillānī seems to have been uninterested in making his *kalāmī* creed known. It is the debates he had with the Christians which the masses knew; the *Khalifah* of ‘Irāq had sent him to Constantinople for that purpose! Common knowledge about al-Bāqillānī at the time particularly concerned his opposition to the *kuffār* and deviant sects, since he outwardly displayed to the general public no more than this.

4 Relevant words are found in *al-Qāḍī* ‘Iyād’s *Tartīb al-Madārik*, vol. 7, p. 57 onwards.

5 Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392

6 Abū Naṣr al-Sijzī, *al-Radd ‘alā man ankar al-Ḥarf wa-l-Ṣawt*, pp. 305–306

7 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 17, p. 558

The reason *al-Ḥāfiẓ* *al-Dāraqutnī* praised *Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī* would therefore only be due to these positive efforts that were well known about him, not because *al-Dāraqutnī* agreed with the specifics of *al-Bāqillānī*'s 'aqīdah. This was stated by *al-Dhahabī*.⁸ *Al-Qādī* *al-Bāqillānī*'s inward beliefs and deep involvement with 'ilm al-kalām was very likely not known except to those people who discussed or sat with him. We have no reason to believe *Imām* *al-Dāraqutnī* was from these few people, and to the contrary, we have reason to believe the opposite.

قال الحافظ أبو عبد الرحمن السلمي في السؤالات: وسمعت الشيخ أبو الحسن يقول: ما في الدنيا شيء أبغض إلي من الكلام.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī* (d. 412) reported in *al-Su’ālāt*, “I heard *al-Shaykh* *Abū al-Ḥasan* [*al-Dāraqutnī*] say, ‘Nothing is more hateful to me than *kalām* [theological rhetoric].’”⁹

On the one hand *al-Dāraqutnī* detested *kalām*, whereas on the other hand one cannot deny that *al-Bāqillānī* was a very learned *mutakallim*!¹⁰ Although we may differ on what “*kalām*” means,¹¹ it is safe to say no real *Ash’arī* would utter *al-Dāraqutnī*'s words here.

Fourthly, we find that *Imām* *al-Dāraqutnī* had also praised the strict *Atharī* scholars; he viewed *Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah* (d. 311), for example, as being a firm *Imām*.¹² There is also one other mention in this regard occurring in *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*:

قال الحافظ أبو عبد الرحمن السلمي في السؤالات: وسألته عن الأزهر؟ فقال: هو أحمد بن محمد بن الأزهر بن حريث، وهو سجستاني، منكر الحديث، إلا أنه بلغني أن محمد بن إسحاق بن خزيمة حسن الرأي فيه، وكفى بهذا نفرا!

Al-Ḥāfiẓ *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī* said in *al-Su’ālāt*, “And I asked him regarding al-Azhari, so he [i.e., *al-Dāraqutnī*] answered, ‘He is Aḥmad b.

8 Ibid.

9 *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 357, and *Imām* *al-Dhahabī* authenticated it in *al-Siyar*, vol. 17, p. 457.

10 To stress this point (although I probably don't need to), *al-Ṣaffadī* (d. 764) states in *al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 47, “*Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī al-Baṣrī*: [he was] the author of multiple works pertaining to 'ilm al-kalām.”

11 But as a side point, *al-Ḥāfiẓ* *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī* (*al-Dāraqutnī*'s student) was known to have cursed *Ahl al-Kalām* such as the *Kullābiyyah*. *Al-Harawī*, *Dhamm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 409.

12 *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 101

Muhammad b. al-Azhar b. Ḥurayth, and he was *Sijistānī*. [He is] rejected in *ḥadīth*, but it has reached me that Muhammad ibn Iṣhāq ibn Khuzaymah had a good opinion of him, and that is sufficient for him as pride!”¹³

Thus, it is clear that al-Dāraqutnī was very fond of Ibn Khuzaymah, the adherence of whom to *Athariyyah* is indisputable.¹⁴ If one were to use this to argue al-Dāraqutnī was *Athārī* rather than *Ash‘arī*, however, an *Ash‘arī* would surely object, “But his praise for Ibn Khuzaymah is not in ‘aqīdah, it’s merely in terms of being a *muḥaddith*!” This would necessitate that he can no longer cling onto the “Baqillānī praise” argument without maintaining a double standard; it is simply just as (if not considerably more) plausible that al-Dāraqutnī’s praise for al-Bāqillānī was likewise unrelated to his ‘aqīdah.

Fifthly, one other scholar we can take into consideration when addressing this issue is Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī (d. 410), whose situation resembles that of al-Dāraqutnī.

Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī was al-Bāqillānī’s companion¹⁵ while simultaneously not only affirming that Allāh speaks with letter (*harf*) and sound (*ṣawt*), but he even stated none of the scholars ever held that the words of the Qur’ān are a created expression.¹⁶ He declared this view to be a misguided innovation, despite the fact that it is precisely what al-Bāqillānī (his companion) had believed!¹⁷ This further bolsters the point at hand: if al-Tamīmī’s friendship with al-Bāqillānī did not entail an agreement in creed between the two, it is even less likely to be the case between him and al-Dāraqutnī.

Ultimately, we cannot definitively determine whether *Imām* al-Dāraqutnī agreed with the *Ashā’irah* without proof that transcends merely appealing to his praise for certain scholars or pointing out that some of his students were from the *mutakallimīn*. The real question is: What did al-Dāraqutnī *himself* say with respect to ‘aqīdah?

The creedal works which were authored by *al-Ḥafīẓ* al-Daraquṭnī include *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, and *Kitāb al-Ru’yah*. Many attempt now to cast doubt upon these books

13 Ibid., p. 128

14 The evidence for this is simply *Imām* Ibn Khuzaymah’s *Kitāb al-Tawḥid* (and the frequent claim that Ibn Khuzaymah repented from this book is a ridiculous belief which nobody has held until recently).

15 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā*, vol. 13, p. 58

16 Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī, *I‘tiqād al-Imām al-Munabbal*, pp. 33, 36

17 This is proven by what al-Bāqillānī says in his works, such as *al-Inṣāf*, ed. al-Azhariyyah, p. 92.

for being narrated via *Abū al-‘Izz ibn Kādish* (d. 526)¹⁸ because he was said to have mixed up when narrating and was even accused of lying by *Ibn al-Najjār*!¹⁹ This accusation is misplaced, however, as *Ibn Kādish* repented from fabrication.²⁰ *Ibn Nāṣir*'s negative opinion of *Ibn Kādish* was also seemingly based largely on his fabrications,²¹ but (as aforementioned) he eventually repented in any case. Also, *al-Ḥafīz* *Ibn ‘Asākir* upheld *Ibn Kādish*'s reliability in response to one of *Ibn Nāṣir*'s statements.²²

The only other criticism against *Ibn Kādish* we know of was that he was accused by ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmāṭī for “mixing up.”²³ However, it is known that in respect to transmitting books from their authors, memory and precision in narration is not an issue (all that is required is to be able to read the book, not to memorise it).²⁴

With that being said, *Ibn al-Jawzī* (d. 597) had words of praise for *Abū al-‘Izz ibn Kādish*, and likewise did *Ibn al-Kaššāb* (d. 567).²⁵ Further, *Al-Ḥafīz* b. ‘Asākir (d. 571) defended *Ibn Kādish* and stated that his transmission is authentic in *samā‘āt* (i.e., public gatherings of a book's reading),²⁶ with *Ibn al-Sam‘ānī* (d. 562) also speaking to this effect.²⁷ Since *Ibn Kādish*'s transmission of *Imām al-Dāraqutnī*'s books would take place in *samā‘āt* (with *Ibn ‘Asākir* himself transmitting creedal works of *al-Dāraqutnī* via *Ibn Kādish*),²⁸ there remains no convincing reason to doubt the authenticity of these books.

Moreover, we find that *Ibn Kādish* was not alone in his transmission. *Kitāb al-Nuzūl* was transmitted not only by *Ibn Kādish*, but it was also reported via another chain.²⁹ Likewise, *Ibn Kādish* was corroborated in regards to *al-Dāraqutnī*'s *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*³⁰ and also

18 He transmitted both *Kitāb al-Ṣifat* and *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah* from *al-‘Ushārī*, from *al-Daraquṭnī*.

19 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 559

20 *Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī*, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 1, p. 218

21 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

22 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 559

23 *Ibid.*

24 Related details are found in *Shaykh Nāṣir Āl Muṭ‘ib*'s work, *Daf‘ al-Shukūk wa-l-Awhām*, p. 15 onwards.

25 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

26 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 559

27 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

28 More details regarding *Ibn Kādish*'s book transmission are cited by *Ibn Ḥajar* in *al-Lisān*, vol. 1, p. 218.

29 This other chain was used by *al-Faqīhī* in his *taḥqīq* of *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*.

30 This was demonstrated in *taḥqīq* of the 1411 A.H. (1990 C.E.) print of *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*, pp. 86–87.

his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*.³¹ What's more, the *shuyūkh* which al-Dāraqutnī narrated from in these three books can be confirmed to be his teachers, and the *mutūn* (texts) of the *ahādīth* in al-Dāraqutnī's creedal works correspond to their *mutūn* found in other books.³² Once the authenticity of these three works are proven, we can take into consideration the fact that their contents make apparent *Imām al-Daraquṭnī* was an uncompromising *Athārī* on the topic of *al-Asmā' wa-l-Ṣifāt* (the names and attributes of Allāh).

From his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, we find that *Imām al-Daraquṭnī* affirmed attributes including the two Feet (*al-Qadamayn*), Hand (*al-Yad*), Fingers (*al-Asābi'*), Face (*al-Wajh*), and laughter (*al-ḍahik*) among other *khabarī Ṣifāt*.³³ This, however, will not be entirely sufficient, as it could easily be claimed that al-Dāraqutnī was upon *tafwīd al-ma'nā* and that his mere narration of these *ahādīth* does not demonstrate otherwise.

Those who claim that *al-Ḥāfiẓ* al-Dāraqutnī was a *mufawwid* of the meanings of the *Ṣifāt* would likely appeal to him narrating from Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ (d. 196):

حدثنا محمد بن مخلد، ثنا العباس بن محمد المدوري، قال: سمعت يحيى بن معين يقول:
شهدت زكرياً بن عدي يسأل، وكيف؟ فقال: يا أبا سفيان إن هذه الأحاديث يعني مثل
الكرسي موضع القدمين، ونحو هذا. فقال وكيف: أدرك إسحاق بن أبي خالد، وسفيان
ومساعراً يحدثون بهذه الأحاديث ولا يفسرون شيئاً.

Regarding the *ahādīth* pertaining to the *Ṣifāt*, such as the *Kursī* being the place of *al-Qadamayn* (the two Feet), Wakī' ibn al-Jarrāḥ said, “We encountered Ismā'īl ibn Abī Khālid and Sufyān [al-Thawrī] and Mis'ar narrating these *ahādīth*, and they did not explain anything.”³⁴

The claim here is that “and they did not explain anything” is a reference to them not explaining the meanings of the *Ṣifāt*. This understanding, however, is rebutted by the

31 A captivating overview in this regard is found [here](#).

32 There is still the claim that Abū Ṭalib al-‘Ushārī (who Ibn Kādīsh transmitted from) himself was also weak, but the little criticism about his mistakes hold no weight in regards to the transmission of a book. The scholars who praised and authenticated him are a multitude, and a detailed defence of al-‘Ushārī's reliability in narration (although not necessary for transmitting a book) is found [here](#), pp. 26–27. Note that *Imām al-‘Ushārī* was also corroborated on multiple occasions regarding these books.

33 This is seen throughout his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, ed. al-Faqīhī, pp. 25–65.

34 Al-Dāraqutnī, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, p. 69

context, since *Wakīc b. al-Jarrāh* (if we refer to the full Arabic version above) only said this in response to being asked “How?” Hence, “they did not explain anything” refers only to not explaining the howness, not that they did *tafwīd* of the *ma‘nā*. What further supports this is the fact that before he narrated this from *Wakīc*, *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* mentioned *al-Qāsim ibn Sallām* (d. 224) saying, “When it is asked, ‘How does Allāh place His Foot? How does Allāh laugh?’ Then we reply, ‘That [i.e., the howness] is not to be explained, and we have not heard anyone explain this.’”³⁵ It is clear based on this that when *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dāraquṭnī* alluded to the prohibition of explaining the *Ṣifāt*, this is only prohibition of explaining the howness (*kayf*), not of explaining the meaning (*ma‘nā*).

What demonstrates that *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* was in fact upon *ithbāt* rather than *tafwīd* is what *Imām Abū al-Qāsim al-Lālakā’ī* (d. 418) reported in *al-Sunnah*:

وَجَدْتُ بِخَطِّ أَبِي الْحَسْنِ الدَّارِقَطْنِيِّ رَحْمَهُ اللَّهُ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقِ الْمَادِيِّ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا الْعَبَّاسَ ثَعْلَباً يَقُولُ: [...]. 《إِسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ》: عَلَّا.

I saw [this report] in the writing of *Abū al-Hasan al-Dāraquṭnī*, may Allāh have mercy on him: from *Ishāq al-Kādhī*, who said: I heard *Abū al-‘Abbās Ta‘lab* say, “‘He *istawā* above the Throne’ [7:54], He ascended [‘alā].”³⁶

This denotes that similar to *al-Lālakā’ī*, *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* also understood *al-istiwa’* to mean that Allāh ascended (‘alā) above the Throne, thus demonstrating that he was not a *mufawwid*. *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* also narrated:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُخْلَدٍ، ثَنَّا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَمْرَنَ، أَبُو الْحَكَمِ أَبُو الْحَسْنِ بْنِ الْعَطَّارِ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ مَصْعُبَ الْعَابِدِ يَقُولُ: مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّكَ لَا تَسْكُنُ وَلَا تَرَى فِي الْآخِرَةِ، فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ بِوْجُوهِكَ وَلَا يَعْرِفُكَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ فَوْقَ الْعَرْشِ فَوْقَ سَبْعِ سَمَاوَاتٍ، وَلَيْسَ كَمَا يَقُولُ أَعْدَاؤُكَ الزَّنَادِقَةُ.

Muhammad ibn Muṣ‘ab al-‘Ābid [d. 228] said, “Whoever claims that You do not speak and [that You] will not be seen in the Hereafter, then he is a disbeliever in Your Face and does not know You. I bear witness that You

35 Ibid., and it is an authentic narration.

36 *Al-Lālakā’ī*, *Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād*, vol. 3, p. 443. Its narrators are reliable.

are above the Throne and over the seven heavens [*fawq al-‘arsh fawq sab‘ samāwāt*], contrary to what your enemies—the heretics—say.”³⁷

This narration also shows *Imām al-Dāraqutnī*’s affirmation of *al-‘Uluww*, and to contend otherwise would simply digress to ad-hoc argumentation.

What indicates that *al-Dāraqutnī* affirmed the apparent meanings of the *Ṣifāt* is that he had no issue in narrating some *ahādīth* which the *Ashā‘irah* would likely object to. One example is *Imām al-Dāraqutnī* narrating a *ḥadīth* affirming a *Kaff* (Palm) for Allāh while proving that Allāh has a *Yamīn* (Right Hand).³⁸ *Al-Dāraqutnī* likewise narrated *ahādīth* on the *hubūt* (coming down) of Allāh to prove His *nuzūl* (descent).³⁹ How did he deduce a correlation between *al-hubūt* and *al-nuzūl* if their meanings were unknown?

Moreover, *al-Hafiz* *al-Dāraqutnī* narrated the *ḥadīth* which describes Allāh as coming down to the lowest heaven and **remaining as such**⁴⁰ until the break of dawn, **when He ascends to the heaven!**⁴¹ This would strike any *Ashā‘irah* as being anthropomorphic, but *al-Dāraqutnī* described the wording “then, He ascends” as being a *ziyādah hasnaah* (good addition)!⁴² He accepted this *ziyādah* despite most *ahādīth* of *al-nuzūl* excluding it.

Similarly, *Imām al-Dāraqutnī* narrated the disputed *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw Allāh in the image of a young man.⁴³ Some of the scholars have accepted this narration while others have renounced it.⁴⁴ Rather than

37 *Al-Dāraqutnī*, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, p. 73. *Shaykh al-Albānī* authenticated its *isnād*.

38 *Ibid.*, 67–68

39 *Al-Dāraqutnī*, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, ed. *al-Faqīhī*, pp. 99, 132, 133, 153–154, 167

40 *Ibn Muhibb al-Ṣāmit* (d. 789) narrated from *al-Dāraqutnī* with the following wording: “He comes down to this heaven [...] **and that remains His place [makān]** until each dawn breaks [...] then, He ascends to the heaven.” *Ibn Muhibb*, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, vol. 2, pp. 552–533; “makān” is also affirmed in *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 96.

41 *Al-Dāraqutnī*, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 133

42 *Ibid.*, *Ibn Muhibb*, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, vol. 2, p. 533

43 *Al-Dāraqutnī*, *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*, p. 358

44 Some of those who accepted it, like *al-Qādī Abū Ya‘lā* (d. 458), argued that it should be understood in a non-anthropomorphic way, the same way we understand the *ahādīth* regarding *al-Yad* and *al-Wajh*. Others, such as *Imām al-Dārimī* (d. 280), rejected this *ḥadīth* altogether in his *Naqd ‘alā al-Marīsī*.

rejecting it, however, *Imām al-Dāraqutnī* cited *Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī* (d. 264) speaking of this report and its narrators in positive terms!⁴⁵

Furthermore, we find that in his *Kitāb al-Šifāt*, *al-Hafiz al-Dāraqutnī* has a section where he reports the *ahādīth* describing the Throne as creaking with Allah mounting upon it!⁴⁶ Never does *al-Dāraqutnī* oppose it nor speak against it, which this indicates he had no objections to its meaning (and perhaps neither to its authenticity).

The many likes of these examples and *ahādīth* which clarify *al-Dāraqutnī*'s true ‘aqīdah led even *Ibn Jamā‘ah* (d. 728), the *Ash‘arī Qādī*, to speak against him in this regard.⁴⁷ There are also the following lines of poetry reported from him:

أَنْشَدَنَا الْحَافِظُ أَبُو الْحَجَاجِ يُوسُفُ بْنُ خَلِيلِ الدَّمْشِقِيِّ بْنُ خَلِيلِ الْحَافِظِ الْمَفِيدِ مِنْ لُفْظِهِ أَنَّا
أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ بْنَ بُوشَ، أَنَّا أَبُو الْعَزِيزِ أَحْمَدَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَادِشَ، أَنْشَدَنَا أَبُو طَالِبِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ
عَلِيِّ الْحَرِيَّ، أَنْشَدَنَا إِلَيْهِ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو الْحَسْنِ عَلِيُّ بْنِ عُمَرِ الدَّارِقَطْنِيِّ، رَحْمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ:

إِلَى أَحْمَدَ الْمُصْطَفَى نَسَنَدَهُ الْعَرْشُ أَيْضًا فَلَا نَجْحَدُهُ وَلَا تَدْخِلُوا فِيهِ مَا يَفْسَدُهُ وَلَا تَجْحِدُوا أَنَّهُ يَقْعُدُ	حَدِيثُ الشَّفَاعَةِ فِي أَحْمَدَ فَأَمَا حَدِيثُ بِإِقْعَادِهِ عَلَى أَمْرِهِ الْحَدِيثُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ وَلَا تَنْكِرُوا أَنَّهُ قَاعِدٌ
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Imām Abū al-Hasan ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar al-Dāraqutnī, may Allāh have mercy on him, said, “The ḥadīth of the intercession by Ahmād—we narrated it with *isnād* to Ahmād al-Muṣṭafā [the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him]. As for the ḥadīth regarding him [i.e., the Prophet] being seated upon the Throne, then that as well we do not reject. Pass along [amirrū] the ḥadīth upon its apparent, and do not delve into that which corrupts. And do not deny that He [i.e., Allāh] is seated [upon the Throne], and do not reject that He will seat him [i.e., the Prophet] [as well].”⁴⁸

45 Ibid.

46 *Al-Dāraqutnī*, *Kitāb al-Šifāt*, pp. 48–49, 50–51, 52–53

47 Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Jamā‘ah, *Īdāh al-Dalil*, p. 233

48 Al-Dashtī, *Ithbāt al-Hadd*, ed. Āl Ḥamadān, pp. 261–262

In these lines of poetry, *Imām al-Dāraqutnī* affirms *qu'ūd* (sitting) for Allāh! However, it is notable that the authenticity of this report is disputed; *Shaykh al-Albānī* weakened it on the basis of the weakness of *Ibn Kādīsh* (who transmitted this from al-‘Ushārī, from al-Dāraqutnī) which ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmātī had attributed to him.⁴⁹ *Shaykh ‘Ādīl Al Ḥamadān* responded by mentioning that not only were these lines of poetry accepted by Al-Dhahabī, *Ibn al-Qayyim*, and *Sulaymān ibn Saḥmān* regardless, but *Abū Ya‘lā* also reported this⁵⁰ from his *shaykh*, al-‘Ushārī, who heard it from al-Dāraqutnī, thus proving that these lines were reported via other than *Ibn Kādīsh* as well.⁵¹ Allāh knows best.

As for the fact that *Imām al-Dāraqutnī* had some *Ash‘arī* students—*Abū Dharr al-Harawī* in particular—then we do not deny this. What caused *Abū Dharr* to become *Ash‘arī* was what he witnessed of al-Dāraqutnī’s praise for al-Bāqillānī⁵² (although this itself does not prove al-Dāraqutnī was an *Ash‘arī*, as has preceded). What most likely occurred was that al-Dāraqutnī’s praise, despite being unrelated to ‘aqīdah, led *Abū Dharr al-Harawī* to begin sitting with al-Bāqillānī and to eventually be affected by his creed. Notably, *Abū Dharr* had never attributed his later ‘aqīdah to al-Dāraqutnī.

Nevertheless, it was also the case that many of al-Dāraqutnī’s students were very firm *Athārīs*. One example is his close student, *al-Shaykh Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī* (d. 406), who heard *al-Sunan*⁵³ from *Imām al-Dāraqutnī*.⁵⁴ *Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī* was known to be an harsh opponent of *Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī*,⁵⁵ and *Abū Ḥāmid* said:

مذهب الشافعى وفقهاء الأمصار أن القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق، ومن قال: مخلوق
 فهو كافر [...] وكل حرف منه كالباء والناء كلام الله غير مخلوق ومن قال: مخلوق
 فهو كافر عليه لعائن الله والناس أجمعين.

“My methodology and that of al-Shāfi‘ī [d. 204] and [that of] the scholars across the lands is that the Qur’ān is the Speech of Allāh, not created.

49 Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Āḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah*, vol. 2, p. 256

50 *Abū Ya‘lā al-Farrā‘*, *Ibtāl al-Ta‘wīlāt*, ed. al-Gharās, p. 532

51 The first footnote on *Ithbāt al-Ḥadd*, ed. Al Ḥamadān, p. 262

52 *Ibn ‘Asākir*, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392

53 It is printed today in 5–6 volumes.

54 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā‘*, vol. 17, p. 194

55 Al-Harawī, *Dhamm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 408

And whoever says it is created, then he is a disbeliever [...] and ever letter of it—such as the *bā* and the *tā*—all of it this the uncreated Speech of Allāh. Whoever says they are created, then he is a disbeliever upon whom be the curse of Allāh and [the curse of] mankind altogether.”⁵⁶

Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī’s attribution of this belief to the scholars (*fuqahā*) across the lands would very likely include his own *shaykh*, *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī*. Because we find *Abū Ḥāmid* would also often make mention of his opposition to *al-Bāqillānī* regarding the Qur’ān’s uncreated nature,⁵⁷ this in turn implies (alongside all the other cumulative evidence) that *al-Dāraquṭnī* would also disagree with *al-Bāqillānī* on this issue.

Another student of *al-Dāraquṭnī* was *al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī* (d. 412). He narrated lots from his teacher in his *Su’ālāt*, including the aforementioned statement in

which *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* said, “Nothing is more hateful to me than *kalām* [theological rhetoric].”⁵⁸ *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī* also has a work dedicated to the censure of *‘ilm al-kalām*,⁵⁹ and *Abū Ismā‘il al-Harawī* (d. 481) reported:

سمعتْ أَمْحَدَ بْنَ أَبِي نَصْرٍ يَقُولُ: رَأَيْنَا مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ الْحَسِينِ السَّلَمِيِّ يَلْعَنُ الْكَلَامِيَّةَ.

“I heard Aḥmad ibn Abī Naṣr say, ‘We found Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī [i.e., *Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān*] cursing the *Kullābiyyah*.’”⁶⁰

Al-Sulamī also stated, “I saw *Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī*, *Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Šu‘lūkī*, *Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl*, and *Abū Manṣūr al-Ḥakim* [all] upon rejection of *kalām* and its adherents.”⁶¹

Lastly, among *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī*’s students was *Imām al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī* (d. 405), who also narrated many statements from him in his *Su’ālāt*. I find it truly unfortunate how it is often said that he was an *Ash‘arī*, as was claimed by *Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī* (d. 771), although he did not bring any evidence except that *Imām al-Ḥākim* took from *Ash‘arī*

56 Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 12, p. 306

57 Ibn Taymiyyah, *Dar’ Ta‘āruḍ al-‘Aql wa-l-Naql*, 2/96

58 *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 357, and *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* authenticated it in *al-Siyar*, vol. 16, p. 457.

59 It is titled *Aḥādīth fī Dhimm al-Kalām wa Ahlih*, printed 1418 A.H. (1996 C.E.).

60 Al-Harawī, *Dhimm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 409. The *Kullābiyyah* were the precursors to the *Ashā‘irah*.

61 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 407, and it is authentic.

scholars such as Abū Bakr al-Šibghī (d. 342),⁶² Abu Bakr Ibn Fūrak (d. 406), and Abū Sahl al-Šu‘lūkī (d. 368).⁶³ This is not very convincing, however, since not only was al-Ḥakim’s interaction with Ibn Fūrak apparently limited,⁶⁴ but Abū Bakr al-Šibghī himself refutes Ibn Fūrak’s creed! Al-Ḥakim transmitted from *Imām* al-Šibghī that he declared anyone who performs *ta’wīl* of the *nuzūl* (descent) of Allāh to mean His command’s descent is a misguided innovator,⁶⁵ whereas these *ta’wīlāt* are precisely what Ibn Fūrak argued for in his works!⁶⁶ *Imām* al-Ḥakim’s transmission also includes Abū Bakr al-Šibghī describing as *Jahmīs* those who understand *al-istiwa’* above the Throne to mean domination,⁶⁷ while this *ta’wīl* was instead mentioned favourably by Ibn Fūrak.⁶⁸ So either al-Ḥakim simultaneously held contradictory ‘aqā’id, or he simply disagreed with Ibn Fūrak here.

We also see that al-Ḥakim approvingly narrated Ibn Khuzaymah’s affirmation of Allāh’s *Uluww* (Ascendancy),⁶⁹ which denotes that they were in agreement on this issue. *Shaykh al-Islām* ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728) similarly said that al-Ḥakim agreed with Ibn Khuzaymah that Allāh speaks when He wills.⁷⁰ *Imām* al-Dhahabī even suggested that al-Ḥakim had *Karrāmī* inclinations⁷¹ based on his speaking highly of Muḥammad ibn Karrām (d. 255).⁷² So it is no surprise *Imām* Ibn al-Mibrad al-Ḥanbalī (d. 909) described as a fabrication the inclusion of al-Ḥakim among the *Ashā’irah*, and he denounced Ibn ‘Asākir for doing so.⁷³ Rather, *al-Hāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar confirmed that al-Ḥakim’s approach to

62 Whether or not al-Šibghī was an *Ashā’irī* is disputable.

63 *Tāj al-Dīn* al-Subkī, *Tabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, p. 162

64 Al-Dhahabī said (*al-Siyar*, vol. 17, p. 216) that al-Ḥakim transmitted only a single *ḥadīth* from Ibn Fūrak.

65 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 14, p. 381

66 Ibn Fūrak, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth wa Bayānuh*, pp. 471–472

67 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 14, p. 381

68 Ibn Fūrak, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth wa Bayānuh*, p. 459

69 Al-Ḥakim, *Ma‘rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, pp. 83–84

70 Ibn Taymiyyah, *Dar’ Ta‘āruḍ al-‘Aql wa-l-Naql*, vol. 2, pp. 9–10

71 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 13, p. 299

72 Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 27, p. 61

73 Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jam‘ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhā’ir, p. 341

the *Şifāt* of Allāh was the same as that of Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī (d. 276),⁷⁴ and Ibn al-Mibrad likewise described *Imām* al-Ḥākim as instead opposing the *Ashā’irah*.⁷⁵

And Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463) said about al-Dāraqutnī:

انتهى إليه علم الأثر، والمعرفة بعلن الحديث، وأسماء الرجال، وأحوال الرواة، مع الصدق والأمانة، والثقة والعدالة، وقبول الشهادة، وصحة الاعتقاد، وسلامة المذهب.

“Knowledge of the narrations, the *ḥadīths*’ [hidden] defects, the names of the people, and the conditions of narrators ended with him. He was with truthfulness and credibility, trustworthiness and balance, acceptability of testimony, correctness of creed [*al-i’tiqād*], and soundness of *madhab*.⁷⁶

The only other scholar regarding whom *al-Ḥafiz* al-Khaṭīb used the exact words “*ṣāḥah al-i’tiqād*” was *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* al-Qādir bi-Allāh (d. 422),⁷⁷ the *Athārī* ruler.⁷⁸ This implies

that according to al-Khaṭīb,⁷⁹ these two were in agreement in regards to creed.

74 Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 3, p. 359. Ibn Qutaybah was from the students of *Imām* Aḥmad who affirmed the *Şifāt* according to the methodology of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, as is seen in his refutation upon the *Jahmiyyah* amongst his other works. For example, in his *Ta’wīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, p. 394, Ibn Qutaybah explained the Āyah “The Most Merciful *istawā* above the Throne” [20:5] to mean Allāh settled (*istaqarr*) above the Throne, and he also affirmed the *qadr al-mushtarak* when doing so.

75 Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jam’ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhā’ir, p. 363

76 Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Badhdād*, vol. 13, p. 487

77 Ibid., vol. 5, p. 61

78 *Al-Shaykh* al-Qādir bi-Allāh dispersed a creedal treatise titled “*al-i’tiqād al-Qādirī*,” wherein he affirmed that *al-istiwā* above the Throne means *al-istiqrār* (settling) and that all the attributes of Allāh are to be [...]

affirmed upon their real/apparent (*haqīqah*), not as being metaphorical (*majāz*). Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-Mursalah*, ed. al-‘Ilmiyyah, vol. 4, p. 1288; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 182–183; and see: al-Dhahabī, *al-‘Uluww li-l-‘Alī al-Ghaffār*, p. 239.

79 *Al-Ḥafiz* al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī also affirmed the *Şifāt* upon their apparent, as al-Dhahabī authentically transmitted in *al-Siyar*, vol. 18, p. 284. This indicates that al-Khaṭīb’s describing the *zawāhir* as indicating *tashbīh* (Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, *al-Jāmi’ li-Akhlaq al-Rāwī*, vol. 2, p. 107) was a former opinion of his from which he retracted. That is because Muḥammad al-Za’farānī (the one who reported al-Khaṭīb’s affirming the *zawāhir*) was amongst al-Khaṭīb’s later students and was only around twenty when his teacher died, may Allah have mercy on them both. So this was his final view, and Allāh knows best.

And *Imām al-Dhahabī* (d. 748) said:

وَحَحْ عَنَ الدَّارِقَطْنِي أَنَّهُ قَالَ: مَا شَيْءَ أَبْغَضَ إِلَيْيَ مِنْ عِلْمِ الْكَلَامِ. قَلْتَ: لَمْ يَدْخُلِ الرَّجُلُ أَبْدًا فِي عِلْمِ الْكَلَامِ وَلَا الْجَدَالِ، وَلَا خَاضَ فِي ذَلِكَ، بَلْ كَانَ سَلْفِيَاً.

“It is authentic from *al-Dāraqutnī* that he said, ‘Nothing is more hateful to me than ‘ilm al-kalām.’ I [al-Dhahabī] say: he never entered into ‘ilm al-kalām or disputation, nor did he indulge in it. Rather, he was a *Salafi*.⁸⁰

And *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Mufassir* *Ibn Kathīr* (d. 774) said:

الحافظ الكبير، أستاذ هذه الصناعة، وقبله بعده وبعده إلى زماننا هذا، سمع الكثير، وجمع وصنف وألف وأجاد وأفاد، وأحسن النظر والتعليق والاتقاد والاعتقاد.

“[Al-Dāraqutnī] was the great *Ḥāfiẓ*, the scholar of this science, [both] for a period before him and [also] after him until this day. He heard abundant [narrations]; he gathered, authored, compiled, and examined, and he was excellent in study, [recognition of] defects, scrutiny, and creed [*i‘tiqād*].⁸¹

Here we see two other *Athārī* scholars (*al-Dhahabī* & *Ibn Kathīr*) attributing *al-Dāraqutnī* to the correct ‘aqīdah (which to them could be no other than the *Athārī* creed).⁸²

Finally, *Imām Ibn al-Mibrad al-Ḥanbalī* (d. 909) mentioned in *Jam‘ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir* when listing out the scholars from *Ahl al-Hadīth*:

وَمِنْهُمُ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو الْحَسْنِ الدَّارِقَطْنِيُّ، كَانَ مُجَانِبًا لَّهُمْ، وَلَهُ كَلَامٌ فِي ذَمِّهِمْ.

80 *Al-Dhahabī*, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā*, vol. 16, p. 457

81 *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Bidayah wa-l-Nihāyah*, ed. Dār al-Fikr, vol. 11, p. 317

82 Many have recently claimed that *al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr* was an *Ash‘arī* because he had been teaching at *Dar al-Hadīth al-Ashrafiyyah*, where it was required to be *Ash‘arī* in order to teach. [Although this argument has been refuted repeatedly](#), conceding this for the sake of argument would not be a problem here because it would entail that *Ibn Kathīr* became *Ash‘arī* after authoring *al-Bidayah wa-l-Nihāyah*, [a book in which he clearly maintains a “Taymītī” creed](#). It was in this same book that *Ibn Kathīr* ascribed *al-Dāraqutnī* to the correct ‘aqīdah, so my point stands nevertheless. More information is available [here](#).

“And from [the *Atharī* scholars] was *al-Imām Abū al-Hasan al-Dāraqutnī*; he was one who turned away from them [i.e., the *Ashā'irah*], and he had words of condemnation against them.”⁸³

By now it should be clear the ‘aqīdah of *Shaykh al-Islām al-Dāraqutnī*, praise be to Allāh.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَحْدَهُ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

83 Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jam‘ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhā’ir, p. 361